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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fifth session
Agenda items 9 and 14 (b)

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD

SPECIFIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS: MINORITIES

Letter dated 22 March 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations Office at Geneva addressed to the Chairman of the Commission on Human Rights

I have the honour to transmit, enclosed herewith,* a statement by the Federal Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I would like to ask you to have it published as an official document of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Human Rights under agenda items 9 and 14 (b).

(Signed): Branko BRANKOVIC
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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* The enclosure is reproduced as received, in English only.

STATEMENT OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

The Federal Government at its today's meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Momir Bulatovic, reviewed the proceedings and the results of the meetings on Kosovo and Metohija held in Rambouillet and Paris, as well as the statement made by the two Co-Chairmen. The Federal Government noted that the further negotiations have been postponed. At the same time, some international representatives are calling into question the diplomatic means and have intensified fresh military threats against our country, which is reprehensible. The Federal Government noted that the Rambouillet talks had not brought about political agreement. This was confirmed in the statements of the Co-Chairmen, and on the basis of that assessment they suggested that the negotiations be continued. There were no talks in Paris. As a result, no agreement could have been reached. The text signed by some members of Kosmet Albanians is not the Agreement of Rambouillet but the text published before all the meetings. The delegation of the Republic of Serbia cannot be blamed for failure of the talks. By accepting the ten principles established by the Contact Group, it demonstrated its firm determination to achieve a political agreement.

The Federal Government urges that the initiated talks be resumed and that all the participants in these talks apply good will to bring the text of the political agreement, in all its segments, in line with the Contact Group's ten principles. The Federal Government fully supports the position of our multi-ethnic delegation not to accept those provisions of the political agreement bringing into question equality of national communities and giving Kosmet the status of a third federal unit or the status of an independent State. The Federal Government points out that no one has the right to force Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to sign such a document. The Federal Government also supports the orientation of the delegation designated by the Republic of Serbia to first reach a political agreement and then to talk about its implementation. A political agreement whereby representatives of the political parties of Kosmet Albanians will accept autonomy and express respect for the territorial integrity and unity of the Republic of Serbia will be the best proof that they have given up the project of destroying the State whose full-fledged citizens they are. Upon signing the political agreement, representatives of the political parties of Albanians could participate in the talks on its implementation but only with members of the delegation of the Republic of Serbia.

The Federal Government has been informed about the unilateral decision of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office to withdraw the members of the Kosovo Verification Mission and noted that the Republic of Serbia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have given no cause for making such a decision. The Federal Government reserves the right to draw appropriate conclusions from this unilateral and counter-productive act. The Federal Government condemns in the strongest terms the build-up of foreign troops on the border of FR Yugoslavia as well as public threats of NATO aggression against our country, which

directly undermines the process of political settlement in Kosovo and Metohija; represents support to separatism and terrorism; violates the fundamental principles enshrined in the UN Charter and the OSCE Helsinki Final Act, and threatens the very foundations of the international legal order. This, at the same time, could pose a threat to peace and security in the wider region of South Eastern Europe and sets a dangerous precedent in international relations. All those threading to use force against our country must face the responsibility for the consequences of humanitarian problems which might arise as a result of the use of such force. Therefore, the Federal Government reiterates its call on the UN Security Council and the OSCE Permanent Council to take necessary steps to rule out force and the military threat against FR Yugoslavia, as an independent, sovereign and peace-loving country and a Member State of these organizations, and to uphold a peaceful political settlement in Kosovo and Metohija.

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